

Notice of Allowability

Application No.	Applicant(s)
10/689,254	LEITNER, HORST
Examiner	Art Unit
Gerald B. Klebe	3618

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment and election response filed June 01, 2004.

2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 50-62.

3. The drawings filed on 20 October 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.

4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of the:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

(a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.

(b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____

4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material

5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.

7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. Other

G.B. Klebe
7 July 2004

Bryan Fischmann
BRYAN FISCHMANN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

Amendment

1. The amendment and response filed June 1, 2004 to Election-of Species requirement mailed April 28, 2004 has been entered. By amendment, claims 50 and 60 were amended and new claims 61-62 added. Claims 50-62 are pending in the application.

Election / Restriction

2. Applicant's election of Species Group II (Figs 3-5) in the reply filed on June 1, 2004 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)) and the restriction is hereby made final.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 50-62 are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

4. The following is an examiner's statement of the reasons for allowance:

The limitations recited in the independent claim of a retractable vehicle step comprising a step member having a stepping deck and a support bracket inboard of the stepping deck; and first and second support arms pivotably connected to an underside of a vehicle about a first pivot axis and a second pivot axis, respectively; and the arms further being pivotably connected to the step member about a third pivot axis and a fourth pivot axis inboard from the third pivot axis, respectively, and where at least one of the support arms extends downward and outboard from the first and second pivot axis when the step member is in a deployed position downward and outboard of a retracted position, and wherein the stepping deck is substantially wider than the

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support bracket, and wherein the support bracket provides a recessed area into which the first support arm is inserted at the third pivot axis, and together with the other recited structures of the claim are not found in the prior art of record, nor may be construed from any reasonable combination derivable therefrom.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this or earlier communication(s) from the examiner should be directed to Gerald B. Klebe at 703-305-0578, fax 703-872-9306; Mon.-Fri., 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM ET, or to Supervisory Patent Examiner Christopher P. Ellis, Art Unit 3618, at 703-305-0168.

Official correspondence should be sent to the following TC 3600 Official Rightfax numbers as follows: Regular correspondence: 703-872-9326; After Finals: 703-872-9327; Customer Service: 703-872-9325.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MS Klebe
gbklebe / Art Unit 3618 / 7 July 2004



CHRISTOPHER P. ELLIS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY DIVISION